

VA Voluntary Service

NEWSLETTER

for the volunteers of the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York

December 2002/January-February 2003 • Volume 2, Issue 4

In the Spirit of Giving

During this holiday season, and throughout the year, the VA holds numerous fundraising programs and initiatives, as well as special events. We always try to include "wish lists" for each facility in this newsletter. These lists are only a small representation of the items we need to continue to provide quality health care and enhanced services to our veteran patients.

Through donations of time and money from individuals, businesses, and service organizations, the VA is able to provide so much more than our budget dollars and staffing allow. Without the generous support of so many of you, many of our special programs, special events, and services would not be possible.

Albany

The Stratton VA Medical Center in Albany holds many unique initiatives.

Members of the Jewish War Veterans, Albany Post 105 spend Christmas Eve at the Stratton VA giving every hospitalized veteran the opportunity to make a long distance call to someone they care for. Operation Jingle Bells is a huge success - providing many veterans their only opportunity to speak to love ones during the holidays.

The American Legion Auxiliary holds their annual Holiday Gift Program each December. Many of our veterans have an opportunity to choose a holiday gift to mail to his/her family - all at the Auxiliary's expense.

Veteran's organizations, fraternal organizations and groups from area businesses make the holiday season brighter for veterans with our Adopt-a-

Veteran Program. Voluntary Service works with our social workers to match sponsors with veterans who have financial or medical difficulties.

Bath

With your support, Bath VA Medical Center Voluntary Service continues to offer activities and programs that are as unique and diverse as the population we serve.

December 25 is traditionally a quiet and often lonely time for residents of health care facilities...but not at Bath. The true personification of giving can be found on Christmas Day at the Bath VA, where you will encounter over 35 of our volunteers hosting visitation, gift-giving, and refreshment programs throughout the facility.

Gerald Babchak, Marine Corps League; **Ardell Shaw**, Disabled American Veterans; and **Don and Dianna Robertshaw**, VFW and

Auxiliary, and a multitude of other caring volunteers donate their time and hearts to make the day brighter for our hospitalized veterans.

The Bath VA also has a POW/MIA Brick Garden within the POW/MIA Rose Garden. The Rose Garden is a living memorial in honor of men and women of the armed forces who were captured and held prisoner and those service members still unaccounted for. For a small fee individuals or organizations can purchase a brick for placement in the garden.

Canandaigua

There are many projects going on in Canandaigua.

Canandaigua hopes to erect a gazebo in memory of a long-time Canandaigua volunteer who passed away this summer.

Helen Gladwin spent a good portion of her life selflessly accumulating more than 90,000 hours of volunteer time over a span of 51 years. The gazebo will be placed outside the building named after her - Gladwin Hall.



(see In the Spirit of Giving page 6)



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The VAVS newsletter has been created for all volunteers and potential volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. This publication is meant to showcase the wonderful work all of our volunteers contribute to VA. Please do not hesitate to contact anyone on the Advisory or Editorial Boards with your comments, corrections or suggestions.



Visit Our Network Web Site

www.va.gov/visns/visn02

Director's Message

Dear volunteers,

Many of you may not know that for the past few months, (former) Network 2 Director, **Fred Malphurs** has been on special assignment in Washington DC. Mr. Malphurs has been acting as Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary on the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) initiative. At the conclusion of his detail, Fred will assume his new assignment as Director of the Gainesville, Florida VA Medical Center. I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge some of the wonderful accomplishments this Network has made under Fred's leadership. Through his vision and inspiration, our Network has:

- Won the 2002 Kizer Award
- Won the 2001 Robert Carey Award
- Made it to Phase II of the Malcolm Baldrige Award
- Received the highest outpatient satisfaction scores within the entire VA system (2002 Satisfaction Survey).

I know you all join me in wishing Fred and his wife Diane, the best of luck with their future endeavors. Until a permanent Network Director is selected, I will be acting as Interim Network Director.



I'd like to take a moment to let each of you know how grateful we are as a Network for your contributions to our veterans. Without your help and dedication, many of our awards would not be possible. We are fortunate to have the best volunteers in the nation working in our medical centers and outpatient clinics.

We appreciate all that you do. You are among our Network's most valuable resources. You are the heart of so many of our programs and facilities. Because of you, we are a better organization.

Thank you for all that you do for our veterans.

Lawrence H. Flesh, M.D.
Interim Network Director

The Department of Veterans Affairs is responding to President George W. Bush's State of the Union Address where he encouraged every American to perform at least 4,000 hours of volunteer service over their lifetime. Network 2 is promoting volunteer opportunities in its communities with the development of a pilot program to recruit volunteers over the internet.

Working in conjunction with New York State Division of Veterans Affairs, and under the sponsorship of the Department of Interior, the program will be mentored, guided, and piloted by Network 2 Voluntary Service through the web site (www.volunteer.gov/gov). Presently focused on volunteer recruitment for the network's involvement with homeless and at-risk populations, we hope to expand this site to include other opportunities from across the VA Health Care System.

Volunteer.gov/gov is a project that follows directly from the national USA Freedom Corps initiative that links organizations from around the country looking for volunteers together with people who are interesting in volunteering their services.





Volunteer Opportunities

Albany

- Ambassador Greeter: greet veterans as they arrive (by vans); get wheelchairs, if needed; and escort them to clinic appointments
- Veterans Industries Office Assistance: clerical assistance (day-to-day office operations) at the Ontario Street location
- Cemetery Information Booth: weekday and weekend volunteers needed to staff the information booth at the entrance of the Saratoga VA National Cemetery
- Pharmacy: assist at prescription pickup window, as well as refilling the "robot" automated dispensing machine

Bath

- *Drivers (Volunteer Transportation Network)
- *Clerical Assistance (Home Based Primary Care)
- Holiday helpers for putting together fruit baskets and wrapping gifts
- Escorts (Nursing Home Care Units and Hospital Wards)
- Veterans History Project
- Hospital Information Desk

*Positions available at the medical center and Elmira outpatient clinic



Canandaigua

- Companion therapy
- Special care companion therapy (Palliative Care ward)
- Reminder phone calls to patients for appointments at Rochester Outpatient Clinic
- Clerical assistance
- Assisting with recreational activities
- Patient escort/transport
- Volunteers needed to provide interaction with dementia clients. An orientation, monthly meetings, and ongoing training will be provided.
- DAV/Volunteer Transportation Network - driving veterans to-and-from their homes for medical appointments
- Performance groups - musical, hobby, performance, etc. to perform for the patients

Syracuse

- Clerical/general - escorting, filing, making reminder calls, answering telephones, etc. at the Binghamton and Rome Outpatient Clinics
- Evening Escorts - transporting patients, delivery of specimens, etc.
- Pharmacy - deliver prescriptions (to wards); work at window dispensing filled prescriptions, mailing prescriptions, etc.
- Rehab Unit (outpatient) - scheduling appointments, reminder calls, filing, transporting patients back to floors, etc.

VA Western New York Healthcare System (Buffalo and Batavia)

- Activity Buddy Program (Nursing Home Care Unit) - Batavia
- Clerical - filing, photocopying, running errands, mailings, paper shredding, etc. - Batavia and Buffalo
- DAV Volunteer Transportation Program - transport veterans to and from clinical appointments - Batavia and Buffalo
- Greeters - welcome veterans and visitors, help them get to appointments and other related areas - Batavia and Buffalo
- Guest Parking Lot Shuttle - transport veterans and guests from cars to and from outpatient entrance - Buffalo
- Patient Escort/Transport Service - assist veterans to and from scheduled appointments and other needs as they occur - Batavia and Buffalo

Canandaigua holds bingo in Bldg. 5, Auditorium.

Escorts are always needed 1/2 hour before start time.

Call Hank Reigel at (585) 393-7370 if you can help with any of these:

December 3, January 7, and February 4 at 7 p.m.

January 12 and February 16 at 2 p.m.





A Volunteer's Volunteer

By Richard Walters, United Voluntary Services volunteer, Bath VA Medical Center

At the Rep/Dep Conference, Network Communications held a contest to solicit articles for the newsletter. The following is the second place submission and the winner of a birdhouse, donated by the Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic Day Treatment Center.

Beatrice O'Brien. Beatrice O'Brien. Who is Beatrice O'Brien? What is it with this woman? That was the question I was asking myself because I heard her name almost every place I went.

Well, I found out that she is a five-foot giant and a bundle of dynamite. She is a giving and caring person who has a heart as big as the great outdoors. She always has time to help you with your problems. She is a published author and poet and she heads the creative writing program at the Bath VA Medical Center. She is a WWII



Bea O'Brien

veteran herself and I believe that is just one of the reasons why she is such a great volunteer. And best of all, I get to work with her every Friday - and what a joy it is. I hope that when I get to be her age, I will have half the energy she has.

She is called Bea or Mrs. B by the veterans. She helps them bring out their hidden writing talents. She gives them back the confidence they lost and so desperately need to get back into the "real" world. The veteran patients just love her and even write poems about her. One of them starts with:

Every Friday at 9

You come in and everything is fine.

There is also a line that goes:

And you've given us new hope that we thought was gone.

I could go on with much more but I think you get the idea. I am very pleased and proud to call her MY FRIEND.

Bea was recently featured in the newly released book: *Chicken Soup for the Teacher's Soul*. Her story "Awakening," is about one of her experiences while conducting creative writing workshops for residents in rehabilitation at the Bath VA. Bea was also featured in *Faces of a Grateful Nation - A Celebration of VA Volunteers*, published by the Voluntary Service Office, Department of Veterans Affairs. She is truly a remarkable and inspirational individual.

WWII Veteran Volunteers Recognized

In October, the Syracuse VA Medical Center held a special recognition event for area World War II veteran volunteers. State Senator, **John DeFrancisco** paid tribute to these central New York veterans, whose heroism and sacrifice helped win WWII. Twenty-nine veterans and their families attended the event. Each veteran was presented with a commemorative pin.

This commemorative pin is modeled after the New York State World War II Memorial Flag. Twenty-eight gold stars are arranged in the shape of New York State on a navy blue field that is identical to the New York State flag. The 28 gold stars symbolize and honor the almost 28,000 New Yorkers who were killed in World War II. The New York State World War II Memorial, a permanent tribute to the 1.7 million New Yorkers who served, was dedicated in Albany last spring. This commemorative pin presentation is part of that statewide recognition.



Twenty-nine WWII veterans came to the Syracuse VA Medical Center to receive their special commemorative pin.





CARES Update

Phase II of the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) began in June 2002. CARES is a plan to redesign our medical system to continue to bring VA into the 21st century. There are several steps in the CARES process: gathering data, analyzing gaps between available services and needs (planning initiatives), developing a plan to match VA facilities with veteran's future health care needs (market plan).

As part of our continuing efforts to keep you informed about the CARES process, the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York is providing the following updates to our stakeholders:

Revised Timeline

November 7, 2002 - The Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary on CARES (former Network Director, **Fred Malphurs**) provided CARES data and briefings to national Veterans Service Organizations (VSO)

November 12 - 16, 2002 - VA Central Office, Washington, D.C. (VACO) and Network teams met to select Planning Initiatives

November 18, 2002 - Present Planning Initiatives to review panels

November 19, 2002 - Brief National VSOs on Planning Initiatives

November 20 - 22, 25 - 26, 2002 - Review Planning Initiatives with Network Director

December 2002 - February 2003 - Networks address Planning Initiatives, solicit local stakeholder input, and develop Market Plans

February 28, 2003 - Market Plans submitted to VACO

March - April 2003 - VACO, including the Clinical CARES Committee, One-VA Committee and Under Secretary for Health will review all submitted Market Plans to assure that the plans submitted will provide high quality health care

May - August 2003 - Commission review, hearing etc.

September 1, 2003 - Submission to VA Secretary

September - October 2003 - Approval by VA Secretary

The CARES timeline has been revised to ensure adequate review time (with respect to the actuarial population/utilization projections) and to allow VA medical centers additional time to adequately inform their stakeholders about the CARES process and to plan for their active participation in developing solutions to the Planning Initiatives. This will help ensure the success of CARES. It is important for all VA stakeholders to remember that:

CARES is a realignment study that will positively affect the way VA delivers care - health care services will be enhanced not reduced. CARES will enable more veterans to receive care that is accessible, appropriate and convenient by putting the facilities, health care workers, and financial resources where veterans need them most.

Nationally, the Department of Veterans Affairs is regularly meeting with congressional representatives,

national veterans service organizations, Department of Defense, and special veteran population groups to brief them on the data findings, including gaps in health care services, where future demand for VA health care services will be, and potential sharing agreements.

Locally, the Directors at each medical center within the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York are taking the opportunity to speak to stakeholders about the CARES process and what it means for the future of VA.

Your Input is Needed

For more information on how you can become involved in the CARES planning process: call, write, or e-mail the Public Affairs Officer at your local VA facility or visit our web site: www.va.gov/visns/visn02/cares

Public Affairs Officers by Medical Center:

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Phone: (518) 626-5522
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VetCare Foundation Raises Money for Network

Veterans Care and Resource Development Corporation (VetCare) is a not-for-profit foundation dedicated to finding creative means to improve the quality, access, and affordability of health care services for veterans enrolled in the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. Since its formation in 1993, the foundation has raised significant amounts of money for the Network. The VetCare board, comprised of community business leaders, veteran and fraternal organization representatives, VA volunteers, and VA personnel, attracts and manages grants and other resources to support innovative programs that would otherwise not be possible due to budget constraints.

VetCare is included in the list of charities covered in the Combined Federal Campaign. Various large fundraisers have also been held, including: a Holiday Homes Tour of homes in the Albany area, including the Governor's mansion; and a gala featuring the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra, USO show, and dinner.

VetCare is the primary sponsor for Fisher House, located on the Stratton VA Medical Center grounds. Fisher House, the first facility of its kind for the VA, opened in 1994. The comfort home is for loved ones of hospitalized veterans and for veterans who live far away from the medical center but require ongoing long-term outpatient treatment.

In addition to Fisher House, VetCare has generously supported: sending veterans to the national rehabilitation programs; telemedicine; numerous equipment needs to enhance patient service; sending veterans to see the Vietnam Wall in Washington, DC; various special events and conferences; hepatitis and diabetes screenings; and much more. For more information about VetCare, visit the website at: www.va.gov/visns/visn02/alb/vetcare.html

Saratoga National Cemetery Honor Guards

By Harold Cronin, Volunteer

This Honor Guard, one of three across the country, was organized in January 1999. The principal duty of our Honor Guard is to make sure that every veteran has the right to a proper military ceremonial burial service. This service is provided at no-charge for all honorably discharged veterans. Many veterans are unaware that their spouse, minor children and (under certain circumstances) unmarried adult children are eligible for burial.

The Honor Guard currently consists of six squads of 12 - 18 volunteers each. All must regularly go for training to learn how to perform the military rounds of rifle fire, the sounding of *Taps*, and the folding of the flag (which is presented to the next of kin). We perform burials Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., no matter what the weather is. My squad has duty every Friday, with every fourth or fifth Friday off. We have performed honor guard services for over 500 burials since 1999 and average about four to eight funerals every Friday.

Many of the volunteers, whose average age is over 64 years old, come from as far as 50 - 60 miles away, at their own expense, to be a part of these services. We are proud and honored to volunteer as an Honor Guard for the proper burial that all veterans deserve.

In the Spirit of Giving (continued from page 1)



Canandaigua's new garden.

Have you seen the courtyard at the Canandaigua VA lately? Thanks to the hard work of Eagle Scout candidate, **Chris Stanton**, his Troop #37, and many staff members, the new garden is really taking shape. We are looking for individuals or organizations that would like to "adopt" a 6' x 6' garden square.

We are also developing a Palliative Care Program, designed to provide end-of-life care for veterans. The nursing home unit (7 building) is being renovated to consist of four patient bedrooms,

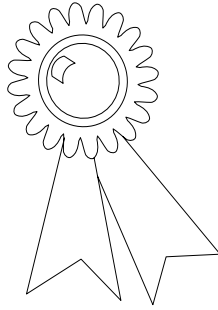
(see In the Spirit of Giving page 12)





Student Volunteer Receives National Award

Syracuse VA Medical Center volunteer, 14 year old, **Sarah Coe** won the American Legion Auxiliary 2001-2002 Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Volunteer



Experience Award for a VolunTeen reporting the best experience while providing volunteer service to a veteran in the Eastern Division.

To qualify for the award, Sarah wrote an essay describing how working with a veteran had affected her. Sarah has been visiting the VA for six years. She initially made occasional visits with the American Legion and VFW. She has been a member of the American Legion Junior Auxiliary Unit 1832 for approximately seven years and was also a member of the Junior Girls at VFW Post 3146 for several years until it disbanded.

Few the past few years, Sarah has been volunteering with **Dorcas Allen** of Unit 1832 and **Carol Walter** the County Auxiliary representative. She generally goes on Wednesdays to help with their bingo but also goes on her days off.

Sarah is a 9th grader at North Syracuse Junior High and is a member of the Field Band and Winterguard.



Here is Sarah's award-winning essay:

How Working With A Veteran Has Affected Me

By Sarah Coe

My life hasn't changed completely from working with veterans even though some people's lives have. I basically volunteer because I enjoy it. It makes me happy when I see how they enjoy having visitors that listen to them and talk for a while. A lot of veterans don't have many people to visit with, so when somebody does come, they are more enthusiastic than some of the volunteers.

Some teenagers can't stand helping people, so when a veteran sees someone who is not like that, they know the world isn't as bad as the news sometimes makes it out to be. In school, we read a book called Stargirl. It is about a girl who isn't like everyone else. She is someone who does nice things for other people because she enjoys helping people - not because she has to or needs community service hours. Anyone who read this book would wish more people were like that instead of being self-centered.

People who volunteer don't get enough credit for what they do for the veterans. I know many people who give up their time to play bingo with the veterans and give them a tasty little treat nearly every Wednesday. If I could go down to the VA every Wednesday, I would but it interferes with school. I enjoy helping with bingo and go during my vacations or days off. Recently, I went over spring break and met some new faces and talked to others I already knew. I overheard one of the newer veterans talking to a nurse. He was telling her about bingo. When she asked if he had won a coupon book, I was astonished by what he said. His exact words were, "I won but I also made a new friend which is better than winning bingo any day." After he said that, he turned and gave me a big smile. I was very happy that he considered me a friend. I only spent between 30-45 minutes talking to him. It makes people realize how lonely some of these people are and how easy it is to make them feel liked and that someone cares. It makes veterans days a whole lot brighter just to see you walk in and it makes you feel great that you do so little and they appreciate it so much.

One of my friends went with me one day and she said, "This is what you do when you come down here?! It is so boring!"

When she said this, I looked her straight in the eye and told her, "Yes. I come down here because I have fun and the veterans like to know people care and they are appreciated." After that, she thought I was one of the nicest people in the world.

Well, I am not good at writing essays because I tend to get off the subject. What I am basically trying to say in not so many words is - I don't really care how working with a veteran affects me, I care about how it affects them. That is just my opinion, and the way it affects them and me.



News from...

Albany

Make a Difference Day, sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation and USA Weekend magazine, is an opportunity for people to help others in their community. On November 4, 15 employees from State Farm Insurance of Ballston Spa volunteered at the Saratoga VA National Cemetery. They spent the day raking leaves, pulling weeds, and other general fall cleanup work. Joe Cassella, Grounds Supervisor (and his staff) warmly welcomed this community service project.

In addition to the project at the cemetery, the State Farm Insurance employees held a toiletry drive. A large box of personal comfort items for our hospitalized veterans was delivered to the Stratton VA Medical Center Volunteer Office on November 4.

Bath

Keuka Maid Trip 2002

In August, 44 Nursing Home Care patients from the Bath VA Medical Center were treated to the annual luncheon cruise on the Keuka Maid. Service organizations and individuals donated funds for the tickets. Thirty-two volunteers, and five staff members were in attendance to assist, socialize and eat lunch with the patients. Many of the patients were able to sit on the outside decks and enjoy the lake scenery and wave at passing boats.

After lunch, a mini-recognition ceremony was held for the summer student volunteers ranging in age from age 9 to 17. Students were presented plaques, movie passes, and the two students with the highest hours were given gift certificates.

Holiday Wishes

The holidays are fast approaching and for many of us our thoughts turn to giving. There is true joy in giving - ask anyone who volunteers. Volunteers have found a sense of balance in their lives, a way to give back to the world, to feel a sense of completeness. Some people call it a form of “altruistic egoism” but those of us fortunate enough to work with volunteers call it a gift.

Whether or not we realize it, each and every person, whether young or old, has a special gift, a hidden talent, just waiting to be developed and to be shared with others. The gift itself is not that important, but rather how you use it. By sharing your gift with others you will discover something wonderful, something that volunteers already know...by brightening someone else's path, you have also brightened your own.

May your holiday season be filled with the same hope and joy you bring to our veterans and facilities each and every day.

We wish you a safe and healthy holiday season.

Sue, Sis and Richard

Canandaigua

Holiday Program

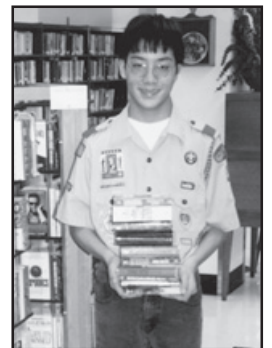
Canandaigua is busy preparing for the holiday season. Each year, our inpatients, as well as outpatients in structured programs in Rochester and Canandaigua enjoy the gifts presented to them because of YOUR generous donations. Approximately 700 patients will receive a calendar, comfort kit, sweatshirt, or radio. Our inpatients will also receive \$10.00. We encourage you to remember this very important program that provides practical items for patients, not just during the holidays but also throughout the year.

Volunteer Award Banquet

Mark your calendars - our Volunteer Awards Banquet will be held on April 25, 2003 at 11:30 a.m. at the Burgundy Basin Inn, Bushnell's Basin. More information to follow.

Book Drive

Chris Malinowski conducted a paperback book drive for our library. Chris collected 3,131 paperback books and 151 hardcover books. Thanks to Chris and Boy Scout Troop #30!



*Christopher Malinowski,
Troop #30*



News from...

Syracuse

New Digs for VAVS

The Voluntary Service suite has been reconfigured to provide better service to our volunteers and staff. These changes positively impact the way VAVS carries out its mission.

With the renovations to the Veteran's Service Center (VSC) complete, the Disabled American Veteran's Voluntary Transportation Network (DAV VTN) have located to the VSC. The vacated DAV VTN space was converted into an education/training and project area. The use of configurable wall panels enabled us to build two offices and a reception area in the remaining space. The office space provides more privacy for interviews and meetings. The reception area keeps timekeeping and contact with stakeholders separate from other functions. The education/training and project area is a convertible space that can be used in many ways. This area has a computer, copy machine, television, VCR, tables, storage cabinets, chairs, and a work desk. Volunteer orientation and training is now done here. This space also acts as a conference space for our Executive Board.

We will be holding an open house and an in-service that showcases our newly renovated space and educate folks about the programs and contributions of VA Voluntary Service.

Western New York

Korean War Commemorations

Since the onset of the Korean War Veteran (KWV) Commemorative Community program, Genesee County Chairman/Veteran Service Officer, **Hal Kreter** has spearhead events that pay tribute to the many milestones of the Korean War and its veterans.

The VA Western New York Healthcare System at Batavia has co-hosted three of these events. The Genesee County Committee held a POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony at the Batavia Holiday Inn. Attendees were given special recognition for their hard work and dedication. At a Veterans Day event (held in the VA auditorium), the KWV Committee recognized nearly 75 KWVs and presented each with a medal. Most recently, a Korean War Veteran Memorial was dedicated in a formal ceremony on November 9, 2002.

POW/MIA Ceremony

Each year, on the third Friday in September, the VA Western New York Healthcare System recognizes POW/MIA Day.

A breakfast ceremony, hosted by Voluntary Service was held at the Hearthstone Manor on Friday, September 20.

Once again, nearly 125 POWs, family members, special guests, and VA staff attended the event. Remarks were presented by representatives from Congressman Jack Quinn's office, Congressman Tom Reynolds' office, the Erie County Legislature, Veterans Service Officers, and the VA Regional Benefits Office.

The highlight of the morning was the Vietnam Veterans Chapter #77's "Remembrance Prayer." In Western New York, Voluntary Service works closely with the POW Coordinator in Buffalo, to ensure that all former POWs/family members from the eight counties are invited and recognized. Efforts are also made to contact the family members of MIA veterans.



Veterans gather for the annual POW/MIA event in Western New York.





Wish Lists

Monetary donations to the General Post Fund are always accepted. Contact your local Voluntary Service Office for more information.

Albany

- ❖ Coats for veterans: warm coats and jackets (size large or bigger) are needed for veterans. Coats should be in excellent condition (preferably dry-cleaned) and dropped off to room B305.
- ❖ Canteen books (for haircuts)
- ❖ Denture adhesive
- ❖ Newspaper subscriptions
- ❖ Funds for:
 - Assistive Listening Devices (\$100.90 each)
 - New van for the Volunteer Transportation Program
 - National Rehabilitative Games
 - Wheelchairs (\$122.48 each)

Bath

- ❖ Craft kits
- ❖ New socks
- ❖ CD players/radios, relaxation tapes
- ❖ Coffee
- ❖ Wheelchairs
- ❖ Snacks for Hematology Clinic
- ❖ Phone cards
- ❖ Duffle bags
- ❖ Afghans
- ❖ Stationary and stamps
- ❖ Board games
- ❖ Funds for:
 - Holiday programs
 - Birthday program
 - Emergency travel

Canandaigua

- ❖ Sponsors for holiday luncheons
- ❖ Tickets to sporting events
- ❖ Decaf coffee
- ❖ Disposable plates, bowls, cups, napkins, and dinnerware
- ❖ Phone cards
- ❖ Personal care items
- ❖ Washer and dryer
- ❖ Funds for:
 - Recreation services
 - General purpose account for veterans needs
 - Holiday Purchasing Fund
 - Storage and maintenance of pontoon boat
- ❖ Craft Items
- ❖ Gift certificates for Wal-Mart, Wegmans, pizza places, McDonalds, Wendy's, movies, etc.
- ❖ Canvas bags with zippers
- ❖ Lap boards
- ❖ Cookies for the Holidays: Homemade cookies are needed for the wards. Please deliver cookies to the auditorium by 12:30 p.m. on December 22.
- ❖ Men's mittens for our mitten tree: Our tree in Voluntary Service is decorated with mittens and scarves for the homeless.
- ❖ Photo albums

- ❖ Battery operated tape players with removable cords
- ❖ Sound spas by Homedic
- ❖ Relaxation tapes

Syracuse

- ❖ Coffee service (\$40/year)
- ❖ Funding for:
 - National Rehabilitative Games
 - Quality of Life Fund
- ❖ Personal care items (toothpaste, shaving cream, razors, etc)
- ❖ Satellite TV Program (1 year/ \$7,000)
- ❖ Telephones, TVs, VCRs
- ❖ Wheelchairs
- ❖ White T-shirts - various sizes

VA Western New York Healthcare System (Buffalo and Batavia)

- ❖ Outdoor gazebo
- ❖ Treadmills
- ❖ DAV/Volunteer Transportation Program
- ❖ Fish tank maintenance
- ❖ 9" color television
- ❖ Patient comfort items



Please contact your local Voluntary Service Office prior to purchasing items or bringing in any large items for donation. Thank you for your kindness and generosity.





Calendar of Events

All Sites

February 9 - 15

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans
Activity-filled week of visits and entertainment to honor veterans.

Albany

December 3 - 6 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
ALA Holiday Gift Program
B305

December 14 Noon
Annual Gift Distribution and Visits
Sponsored by the Veterans Holiday Committee

January 14 1:00 p.m.
VAVS Committee Meeting
Auditorium

February 21 9:00 a.m.
Re-enactment of the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima
Front circle of VAMC
Ceremony immediately after in Lobby

February 23 2:30 p.m.
Four Chaplains Brotherhood Award Ceremony
Ceremony in Chapel
Reception immediately after in Auditorium

Bath

December 3 - 4 1:00 p.m.
Holiday Gift Wrapping Program
Bldg. 44

December 7
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
Location/time to be announced

December 20 11:00 a.m.
Operation Delivery Santa
Facility-wide

December 25 10:00 a.m.
VFW/Marine Corps League/DAV Holiday Visits
Bldg. 76 & Bldg. 78

January 16 1:30 p.m.
VAVS Meeting
Bldg. 92, Leisure Room

January 20 1:30 p.m.
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Service
Union Chapel

March 4 1:30 p.m.
Mardi Gras Party
Bldg. 78

Canandaigua

December 10 1:00 p.m.
VAVS Gift Wrap
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

December 22 12:30 p.m.
VAVS Holiday Gift Distribution
Bldg. 5, Auditorium
Don't forget your Santa hats and homemade cookies!

February 12 1 p.m.
VAVS Meeting
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

February 14 10 a.m.
Valentine Distribution/Ward Visitation
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

Syracuse

December 2 - 3 All day
Gift Shop
Sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary
Auditorium

December 17 Noon - 8 p.m.
VFW Sponsored Hospital-Wide Distribution
Distribution at 6 p.m.

January 17 11:00 a.m.
Martin Luther King Observance Day
Auditorium

VA Western New York Healthcare System

December 2 - 6
VAVS Facility Holiday Season Decorating
Batavia and Buffalo

December 2
American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop
Batavia - Auditorium, Bldg. #4

December 4
Plant Distribution
Order of the Eastern Star
Batavia - Auditorium, Bldg. #4

December 9
Wreath Making Project and Distribution
Amherst Garden Club
Buffalo - Room 301

December 10 - 11
American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop
Buffalo - Room 301

December 11
Holiday Gift Bag Packing 10:30 a.m.
VAVS Meeting 1:30 p.m.
Batavia - Auditorium, Bldg. #4

December 18 1:30 p.m.
VAVS Packing of Holiday Gift Bags
Buffalo - Room 301

December 25
Christmas Day Gift Distribution
Batavia and Buffalo

January 6 - 10
VAVS Taking Down Holiday Trees & Decorations
Batavia and Buffalo

January 17 11:30 a.m.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Ceremony
Buffalo - Room 301





In the Spirit of Giving (continued from page 6)

so a family member can stay with the patient 24 hours per day. A kitchen will be stocked with food and there will be a living area with a television and comfortable space for families and veterans to use during visits.

We need new linens, comforters, decorations, televisions and any type of décor suited to encourage and stimulate continual relaxation. We are looking for organizations to "adopt" a room. Monetary donations will be accepted to assist the Palliative Care team in furnishing the rooms. The donations will be acknowledged with an engraved plaque that will be placed on the wall of the Palliative Care unit.

Syracuse

For the past five years, the Syracuse VA Medical Center has held a special fundraiser during the holidays - the Holiday Memory Tree. Each year, letters are sent out to various organizations and employees, informing them that they can purchase an ornament in honor or memory of a loved one. The ornaments are placed on a tree located in the auditorium. The tree is donated and delivered by a local tree

farm, each year. The money raised is used for different designated purposes, each year. This year, the money will be used to defray the cost of the Syracuse VA Medical Center's 50th anniversary celebrations.

VA Western New York Healthcare System

The DAV Volunteer Transportation Network in collaboration with the VA Western New York Healthcare System has a new sponsorship program to raise money for the purchase of new vans.

At this time, there is a need to replace the current fleet of vehicles. The goal of the program is to create awareness and raise \$32,000. There are four levels of sponsorship: Gold: \$2,500, Silver: \$1,500, Bronze: \$500, and Patron: \$100.

If you can help with any of these initiatives, please contact your local Volunteer Office. Your assistance, no matter how big or small is always appreciated. Your contributions make a difference in the lives of so many of our nation's veterans.



VA Healthcare Network
Upstate New York
Network 2 Communications
465 Westfall Road
Rochester, New York 14620

Official Business
Penalty for private use
\$300

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAL PAID
Permit No. 41
Bath, NY 14810